

Update on developer contribution costs for early years and education

The Developers Guide in paragraph 1.22 says, *The Developers Guide and supporting topic papers will be regularly updated to provide current cost information and changes to supporting policies.* This update replaces previous cost multipliers information referred to in the Developers Guide, the Early Years and Childcare Provision topic paper, the Education Provision topic paper and The Code of Practice Protocol.

The Department for Education (DfE) publications *Securing developer contributions for education* [revised November 2019] and *Education provision in garden communities* [April 2019], should be read in conjunction with the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) on planning obligations [updated 01 September 2019]. The county council will use the DfE guidance to help it secure developer contributions for education so that housing developers contribute to the cost of providing the new school places required due to housing growth.

In paragraph 15 of the DfE publication *Securing developer contributions for education* it says, *We advise that you base the assumed cost of mainstream school places on national average costs published annually in the DfE school place scorecards. This allows you to differentiate between the average per pupil costs of a new school, permanent expansion or temporary expansion, ensuring developer contributions are fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development. You should adjust the national average to reflect the costs in your region, using BCIS location factors. We recommend the use of index linking in planning obligations so that contributions are adjusted for inflation at the point they are due.*

In paragraph 16 it says, *Developer contributions for early years provision will usually be used to fund places at existing or new school sites, incorporated within primary or all-through schools. Therefore, we recommend that the per pupil cost of early years provision is assumed to be the same as for a primary school. Similarly, further education places provided within secondary school sixth forms will cost broadly the same as a secondary school place.*

The DfE has published [26 June 2025] the latest *Local authority school places scorecards* [Local authority school places scorecards, Reporting year 2024 - Explore education statistics - GOV.UK](#) The DfE guidance on delivering schools to support housing growth recommends using cost data in the latest scorecards to help establish developer contributions per school place, adjusting the national average for region and inflation. Paragraphs 33 and 34 of the DfE guidance includes reference to using 10% uplift of the scorecard costs to meet additional climate change, environmental or design policy requirements.

Paragraph 18 of the DfE guidance says, *Where there is local evidence of higher costs for a particular project, such as a bespoke feasibility study or known site abnormalities, these can be used in preference to the adjusted national average.* Suffolk County Council will apply the following DfE school place scorecard costs (unless bespoke new build costs are known – see below) to planning obligations entered into on or after 01 August 2025:

- Early years expansion cost per pupil place – **£22,270**
- Early years new build cost per pupil place – **£26,588**
- Primary school expansion cost per pupil place – **£22,270**
- Primary school new build cost per pupil place – **£26,588**
- Secondary school expansion cost per pupil place – **£30,630**
- Secondary school new build cost per pupil place – **£32,211**
- Sixth form expansion cost per pupil place – **£30,630**
- Sixth form new build cost per pupil place – **£32,211**

Bespoke new build costs:

- Early years new build cost per pupil place for a standalone 30-places setting – **£44,033**
- Early years new build cost per pupil place for a standalone 60-places setting – **£36,050**
- Primary school new build cost per pupil place for 210-places with a 30-places setting – **£34,996**
- Primary school new build cost per pupil place for 420-places with a 60-places setting – **£28,760**
- Secondary school new build cost per pupil place – **£47,416**

Other costs:

- In paragraph 17 of the DfE publication it says, *Special schools require more space per pupil than mainstream schools, and this should be reflected in the assumed costs of provision. We recommend that developer contributions for special or alternative school places are set at four times the cost of mainstream places, consistent with the space standards in Building Bulletin 104. You can also refer to the National School Delivery Cost Benchmarking report for the costs of delivering SEN school places.*
- Temporary classroom cost – minimum cost of **£250,000**
- Home to school transport cost for mainstream pupils – average annual transport cost per pupil is **£1,701**, with a minimum of 7 years for primary-age pupils and a minimum of 5 years for secondary age (11 – 16) pupils.
- Home to school transport cost for pupil referral units (PRUs) – average annual transport cost per pupil – **£11,819**

- Home to school transport cost for special education needs (SEN) – average annual transport cost per pupil – **£11,819**

Forecasting pupils from new housing

The county council's pupil yields are taken from the 'headline' yields for Suffolk provided by the Department for Education [Pupil Yield Data Dashboard](#). The DfE guidance *Estimating pupil yield from housing development* (August 2023) recommends at paragraph 15 that the "starting point is the "headline" pupil yield factors for 2021/22, as these are based on the full sample of developments between 2008 and 2022". These yields are considered a baseline position which could be supplemented or adjusted to local circumstances and evidence. The DfE dashboard provides a technical note to accompany the data, and when reviewing the data it is important to only select Suffolk along with the dwelling type, size and all tenure from the filters.

For contributions toward primary and secondary places the pupil yield is calculated to 2 decimal places per individual dwelling and a whole number for calculations per 100 dwellings. For sixth form places the pupil yield is calculated to 3 decimal places per individual dwelling and to 1 decimal place for calculations per 100 dwellings. The calculated pupil yield will be rounded up to the nearest whole number to determine the total number of places required per phase of education.

This pupil yields will be used to forecast the education needs for each type of education provision arising from new housing developments in the County. The pupil yield factors allow for estimation of the number of early years, primary, secondary, and post-16 places required as a direct result of development. The school phase age yields from qualifying dwellings (flats or houses) are set out in the table below:

Dwelling Type	Primary pupil yield (2021/22)		Secondary pupil yield (2021/22)		Sixth Form pupil yield (2020/21 reporting year. DfE figures for the 2021/22 year are not available)	
	Per Dwelling	Per 100 Dwellings	Per Dwelling	Per 100 Dwellings	Per Dwelling	Per 100 Dwellings
Flats with 1	0.03	3	0.02	2	0.015	1.5

bedroom						
Flats with 2 or more bedrooms	0.18	18	0.05	5	0.017	1.7
Houses with 1 bedroom	0.13	13	0.06	6	0.024	2.4
Houses with 2 or more bedroom	0.32	32	0.15	15	0.055	5.5

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